

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

*A Daily Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy*

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**April 5, 2010**

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## President Obama's Letter to Congress on Censorship in Iran

*Report address U.S. efforts to ensure free flow of information to Iranians*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary  
April 1, 2010

TEXT OF A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT TO THE  
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE  
April 1, 2010

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the authorities contained in section 1264 of the Victims of Iranian Censorship Act (Subtitle D of Title XII of Public Law 111-84, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010), I am providing a report prepared by my Administration. This report details U.S. efforts to ensure the free flow of information to Iran and to enhance the abilities of Iranians to exercise their universal rights.

Sincerely,

BARACK OBAMA

## Presidents Obama and Hu Discuss U.S.-China Relations

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao spoke by telephone for about an hour April 1 on shared interests in stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and in protecting against the threat of nuclear terrorism.

The two world leaders also exchanged ideas about how best to deal with an Iranian regime that has not been forthcoming in explaining its nuclear development program, the White House said in a statement April 1 after Obama returned from Democratic Party fundraising events in the Northeast.

Earlier, the Chinese government announced that Hu would visit Washington April 12-13 to attend President Obama's Global Nuclear Summit. The summit is a significant part of achieving the president's vision of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The White House said the April summit "will be an important opportunity for them to address their shared

interest in stopping nuclear proliferation and protecting against nuclear terrorism."

Hu's trip will also offer an opportunity for China and the United States to reduce recent tensions over economic, trade and political issues, the White House said, adding that Obama and Hu "also discussed the importance of developing a positive bilateral relationship."

The United States and other Western partners have been working in recent months to increase pressure on the Iranian regime over its nuclear development program. The five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — have discussed imposing additional economic and political sanctions on Iran. China has insisted on further efforts to reach the Iranian regime through diplomatic initiatives before resorting to a new round of sanctions.

"President Obama underscored the importance of working together to ensure that Iran lives up to its international obligations," the White House said after the two spoke for an hour by telephone from Air Force One. The presidential plane was held on the ground for about 10 additional minutes at Andrews Air Force Base outside Washington until the president completed the call.

Obama also discussed commitments made at the two summits of the Group of 20 in 2009. China, the United States and the other nations in the group pledged to implement new policies designed to produce balanced and sustainable growth, and to implement more stringent regulations for the financial sector.

## U.S. Eliminates Country-Based Scrutiny for Air Travelers

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — After consultations with governments and airline representatives, as well as U.S. intelligence and law enforcement personnel, the Obama administration has announced new security measures governing air travel to the United States that will screen all passengers based on real-time intelligence, thereby eliminating emergency measures that had focused on citizens from certain countries.

In an April 2 statement, the Department of Homeland Security said the new measures are designed to be more flexible and efficient, and are tailored to "reflect the most current information available to the U.S. government" as a means of ensuring the safety of travelers.

"The enhanced security measures that are going into effect are tailored to intelligence about potential threats

and are focused on all passengers from all countries," the statement said. The change eliminates special scrutiny for citizens of 14 countries that was implemented after the attempted bombing of a U.S.-bound airliner on December 25, 2009.

"Passengers traveling to the United States from international destinations may notice enhanced security and random screening measures throughout the passenger check-in and boarding process, including the use of explosives trace detection, advanced imaging technology, canine teams or pat downs, among other security measures," the statement said.

Since the attempted bombing, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano has participated in regional aviation security meetings around the world to forge international agreements on "enhanced information collection and sharing, cooperation on technological development and modernized aviation security standards." The statement said Napolitano has led a global initiative to strengthen airline security in conjunction with the U.N.'s International Civil Aviation Organization.

The State Department's assistant secretary for public affairs, P.J. Crowley, told reporters April 2 that the new system also applies to American citizens, and includes strengthened watch-lists and more flexible security protocols to reflect the most current threat information.

"These changes came about through a rigorous interagency review process that included a number of government agencies including the Department of State, with input from partners in government and industry around the world, [the] intelligence community and law enforcement," Crowley said.

"Many of our partners around the globe have also increased their own security measures, and the overall intent of this effort is to enforce and ensure the safety and security of everyone traveling by air anywhere in the world," he said.

Crowley said the "particular emphasis given to 14 countries" after December 25, 2009, was neither sustainable nor efficient. "Since that time, we've been engaged in intensive dialogue with those countries," he said.

"This new procedure ... is much more effective, much more efficient, much more concentrated on the threat as we see it, and will apply to all passengers coming to the United States," he said.

A senior State Department official who asked not to be identified said the list of 14 countries had been "an

understandable step" following the December 2009 attack and had been effective, but "there was a cost" in terms of the U.S. image.

"We have taken those concerns on board," the official said. At the same time, air travel remains a prime target for terrorists and "we know someone's going to try and attack it again."

"We're trying to put in place security that will protect everyone — American citizens as well as the citizens of the world — and we have found what we think is a better way to do that," the official said.

## Global Economy Remains Fragile

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — President Obama and four other world leaders wrote an open letter to the members of the Group of 20 industrialized and developing economies warning that it is essential to follow through on reforms they promised at two recent summits, because the "recovery in the world economy remains fragile."

"Current strains illustrate the continuing risks to global economic and financial stability," the letter from the five members of the G20 steering group said.

"Without cooperative action to make the necessary adjustments to achieve [strong and sustainable growth], the risk of future crises and low growth will remain," the leaders said in the March 29 letter. Copies were released in Washington and other world capitals.

The letter was signed by Obama, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, French President Nicolas Sarkozy and South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, who form the steering group of future and past hosts of G20 summits.

The group of advanced and emerging economies met in London in April 2009 and then in Pittsburgh in September 2009 to plan financial reforms. The reforms are intended to steer the global economy away from the effects of cyclical swings from expansive growth to recession. The meetings came as the world was still reeling from the fallout of the worst recession since the 1930s.

Canada is hosting a G20 Summit in Toronto June 26-27, and South Korea will host a summit in Seoul November 11-12. A country that hosts a summit sets the agenda after consultations with other members.

Because of the recession that began in December 2007, G20 leaders opted to hold meetings twice a year to set

goals and policies, and also to review efforts and share information on effective measures to resolve the global economic crisis.

G20 leaders have called for increased regulation of the financial, banking and investment sectors in an effort to rein in excessive risk taking and destabilizing market speculation. The U.S. Congress is considering legislation aimed at overhauling financial regulation in the United States.

"We need to design cooperative strategies and work together to ensure that our fiscal, monetary, foreign exchange, trade and structural policies are collectively consistent with strong, sustainable and balanced growth," the leaders said. "We all understand that ongoing trade, fiscal and structural imbalances cannot lead to strong and sustainable growth."

G20 leaders have created a framework designed to shrink trade surpluses in export-rich countries such as China and boost savings in debt-laden nations including the United States. In an effort to balance the global economic system, the G20 agreed that member nations with sustained, significant deficits should undertake policies to support private savings and undertake fiscal consolidation while keeping markets open and strengthening export sectors.

G20 nations with sustained surpluses pledged to strengthen domestic sources of growth by increasing investment, reducing market distortions, boosting productivity, improving the social safety net for their citizens, and lifting constraints imposed on growth.

In a speech last year on Wall Street, the president called on the nation's financial industry to work with him and Congress in crafting a new regulatory system to prevent a future economic catastrophe. Obama said the U.S. economy is beginning to return to normal as a result of interventions in the marketplace by the federal government. But he warned the financial sector that "normalcy cannot lead to complacency."

"We need strong rules of the road to guard against the kind of systemic risks that we've seen," Obama said.

"We will not go back to the days of reckless behavior and unchecked excess that was at the heart of this crisis, where too many were motivated only by the appetite for quick kills and bloated bonuses," Obama said. "Those on Wall Street cannot resume taking risks without regard for consequences, and expect that next time, American taxpayers will be there to break their fall."

The March 29 letter also addressed the long-stalled Doha trade-liberalization talks and the need to continue to resist protectionist pressures during times of economic stress.

"The G20 must go beyond merely advocating for trade and against protectionism. With regard to Doha, we need to determine whether we can achieve the greater level of ambition necessary to make an agreement feasible," the letter said. The five G20 leaders said nations must reduce domestic trade barriers through bilateral and regional negotiations.

#### GROUP OF 20

The G20, established in 1999 in the wake of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, brought together advanced and emerging economies to stabilize global financial markets. The first meeting was held in Berlin in 1999.

The G20 holds annual meetings of finance ministers and central bank governors to discuss measures to promote financial stability and to achieve sustainable economic growth.

The G20 includes Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The European Union, represented by its rotating presidency, is the 20th member of the group. The group's meetings also include representatives from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions and nongovernmental organizations.

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